

AD-A174 234

OPERATIONAL RESERVES IN AFCEM - ANOTHER LOOK(U) ARMY

1/1

COMMAND AND GENERAL STAFF COLL FORT LEAVENWORTH KS

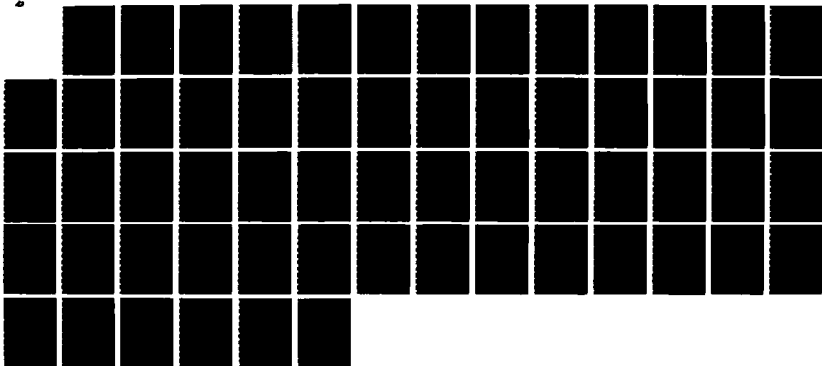
SCHOOL OF ADVANCED MILITARY STUDIES G M ECKERT

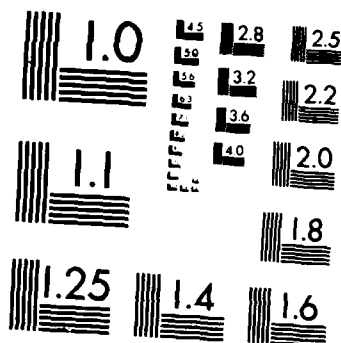
UNCLASSIFIED

19 MAY 86

F/G 15/7

NL





MICROCOPY RESOLUTION TEST CHART
NATIONAL BUREAU OF STANDARDS 1963-A

AD-A174 234

*add
file only!*

2

Operational Reserves in AFCEM
Another Look

by

Major Gregory M. Eckert
Armor

School of Advanced Military Studies
U.S. Army command and General Staff College
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas

19 May 1986

DTIC
ELECTE
NOV 19 1986

B

Approved for public release; distribution is unlimited

APPROVED FOR PUBLIC RELEASE
DISTRIBUTION UNLIMITED

DTIC FILE COPY

DISCLAIMER NOTICE

**THIS DOCUMENT IS BEST QUALITY
PRACTICABLE. THE COPY FURNISHED
TO DTIC CONTAINED A SIGNIFICANT
NUMBER OF PAGES WHICH DO NOT
REPRODUCE LEGIBLY.**

UNCLASSIFIED

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

PAGE

REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE

1a. REPORT SECURITY CLASSIFICATION UNCLASSIFIED			1b. RESTRICTIVE MARKINGS		
2a. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION AUTHORITY			3. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY OF REPORT Approved for Public Release; Distribution is unlimited		
4. DECLASSIFICATION/DOWNGRADING SCHEDULE			5. MONITORING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER(S)		
4. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER(S) <i>School of Advanced Military Studies</i>			5. MONITORING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER(S)		
6a. NAME OF PERFORMING ORGANIZATION US Army Command and General Staff College		6b. OFFICE SYMBOL (if applicable) ATZL-SWD-GD		7a. NAME OF MONITORING ORGANIZATION	
6c. ADDRESS (City, State, and Zip Code) Fort Leavenworth, Kansas 66027		7b. ADDRESS (City, State, and Zip Code)			
8a. NAME OF FUNDING/SPONSORING ORGANIZATION		8b. OFFICE SYMBOL (if applicable)		9. PROCUREMENT INSTRUMENT IDENTIFICATION NUMBER	
8c. ADDRESS (City, State, and Zip Code)		10. SOURCE OF FUNDING NUMBERS			
		PROGRAM ELEMENT NO.		PROJECT NO.	
		TASK NO.		WORK UNIT ACCESS ON NO.	
11. TITLE (Include Security Classification) Operational Reserves in AFCEM: Another Look					
12. PERSONAL AUTHOR(S) Eckert, Gregory M., MAJ, US Army					
13a. TYPE OF REPORT Monograph		13b. TIME COVERED FROM TO		14. DATE OF REPORT (Year, Month, Day) 19 May 1986	
15. PAGE COUNT					
16. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTATION					
17. CCBATI CODES			18. SUBJECT TERMS (Continue on reverse if necessary and identify by block number)		
FIELD	GROUP	SUB-GROUP	OPERATIONAL ARS RESERVES AFCEM		
19. ABSTRACT (Continue on reverse if necessary and identify by block number) This study examines what the key issues are governing the creation and employment of operational reserves by AFCEM in its defense against a no or short notice Warsaw Pact attack. The theoretical notion of operational reserves as discussed by Clausewitz and the use of operational reserves as presented by FM 100-5 provide the background for an historical analysis of how operational reserves were used in three World War II defensive campaigns. From this analysis, implications for AFCEM are drawn. The primary conclusion of this study is that for AFCEM, the costs of creating a large operational reserve at the expense of its subordinate commands exceed the benefits. In fact, the concept of a reserve at the operational level appears to be fundamentally different than the concept of a reserve at the tactical level. (continued on reverse side)					
20. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY OF ABSTRACT <input type="checkbox"/> UNCLASSIFIED/UNLIMITED <input type="checkbox"/> SAME AS RPT. <input type="checkbox"/> DTIC USERS			21. ABSTRACT SECURITY CLASSIFICATION UNCLASSIFIED		
22a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE INDIVIDUAL Gregory M. Eckert			22b. TELEPHONE (include Area Code) 913-684-3345		22c. OFFICE SYMBOL ATZL-DW

A combination of several factors, some of the more critical of which are a political guideline of forward defense, and a defense organized around a somewhat disparate group of national corps does not lend itself to the employment of large centrally controlled operational reserves. AFCEM should not attempt to maintain operational flexibility through the use of a large operational reserve. Rather, it should maintain its flexibility through the proper sequencing of engagements and battles, the acceptance of risk, and the allocation of critical resources such as air, logistics, and reinforcements.

Operational Reserves in AFCENT
Another Look

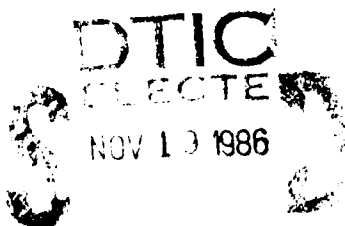
by

Major Gregory M. Eckert
Armor

School of Advanced Military Studies
U.S. Army command and General Staff College
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas

19 May 1986

Approved for public release; distribution is unlimited



B

APPROVED FOR PUBLIC RELEASE
DISTRIBUTION UNLIMITED

School of Advanced Military Studies
Monograph Approval

Name of Student: Major Gregory M. Eckert

Title of Monograph: Operational Reserves in AFCENT: Another Look

Approved by:

Dale E. Fincke
Lieutenant Colonel Dale E. Fincke, M.S.

Advanced Operational
Studies Fellow

Richard H. Sinnreich
Colonel Richard H. Sinnreich, M.A.

Director, School of
Advanced Military
Studies

Philip J. Brookes
Philip J. Brookes, Ph.D.

Director, Graduate
Degree Programs

Accepted this 21st day of May 1986



Accession For	
NTIS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
DTIC	<input type="checkbox"/>
Uncl	<input type="checkbox"/>
Just	<input type="checkbox"/>
By	
Date	
Avail	
Dist	
A-1	

li

ABSTRACT

OPERATIONAL RESERVES IN AFCENT: ANOTHER LOOK by Major Gregory M. Eckert, USA, 52 pages.

This study examines what the key issues are governing the creation and employment of operational reserves by AFCENT in its defense against a no or short notice Warsaw Pact attack. The theoretical notion of operational reserves as discussed by Clausewitz and the use of operational reserves as presented by FM 100-5 provide the background for an historical analysis of how operational reserves were used in three World War II defensive campaigns. From this historical analysis, implications for AFCENT are drawn.

The primary conclusion of this study is that for AFCENT, the costs of creating a large operational reserve at the expense of its subordinate commands exceed the benefits. In fact, the concept of a reserve at the operational level appears to be fundamentally different than the concept of a reserve at the tactical level.

A combination of several factors, some of the more critical of which are terrain, the political guideline of forward defense, and a defense organized around somewhat disparate national corps does not lend itself to the employment of large centrally controlled operational reserves. AFCENT should not attempt to maintain operational flexibility through the use of a large operational reserve. Rather, it should maintain its flexibility through the proper sequencing of engagements and battles, the acceptance of risk, and the allocation of critical resources such as air, logistics, and reinforcements.

mi

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	page
Section I. Introduction	1
II. Problem Background	4
III. The Theoretical and Doctrinal Concept of Operational Reserves	9
IV. Historical Case Studies	11
A. The Defensive Campaign of Army Group Don	11
B. The Defensive Campaign in the Ardennes	16
C. The Defense of the Atlantic Wall	21
V. Analysis	25
VI. Implications for AFCENT	32
Appendix A. AFCENT's Defensive Structure	37
B. Situation on the Eastern Front: December 1942-January 1943	38
C. Situation on the Eastern Front: February 1943	39
D. Allied Situation Early December 1944	40
E. First Army Situation 15 December 1944	41
F. Disposition of German Panzer Units in France: June 1944	42
Endnotes	43
Bibliography	48

I. Introduction

The defense of Central Europe has been a matter of intense debate since NATO was first created. As General Bagnal, a former commander of the Northern Army Group (NORTHAG) has noted, the critical issue for Allied Forces Central Europe (AFCENT) is how to

... develop a concept which achieves the necessary degree of operational flexibility within the political guidelines, which would enable us to take the initiative ourselves at an early stage. 1

From an operational perspective, one of the most significant political guidelines facing AFCENT is forward defense which acknowledges certain political, geographic, and economic realities in the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG). Briefly stated, forward defense requires that NATO must meet and attempt to defeat a Warsaw Pact attack as close to the Inter-German Border (IGB) as possible in order to minimize both the loss of ground and the resultant damage.

Forward defense is one of the main issues associated with the current debate surrounding the defense of Central Europe. Another key issue is the renewed interest in developing a more maneuver oriented operational style of war. ² FM 100-5 (final draft) defines operational art as

...the employment of military forces to attain strategic goals in a theater of war or theater of operations through the design, organization, and conduct of campaigns and major operations. 3

Critics argue that reliance on forward defense will ultimately result in AFCENT adopting an attritional campaign which it will inevitably lose against an overwhelming Soviet

superiority in manpower and materiel. Unfortunately, many of these critics have allowed the strategic/political guideline of forward defense to become confused with the operational means of implementing it. That notwithstanding, they argue that what is required is a more mobile defense in which large operational reserves are employed to destroy the enemy in a decisive battle(s) of annihilation after he has penetrated the forward defenses. In this regard, they further assert that AFCENT lacks sufficient operational reserves to conduct a successful conventional defensive campaign.

This paper will examine this assertion by undertaking a historical analysis to determine what the key issues are governing the creation and use of operational reserves. As will be seen in the following section, it appears that part of the confusion stems from a certain lack of specificity concerning what operational reserves in fact are. As a point of departure, this paper will adopt the definition of operational reserves contained in FM 100-5 - "...corps or divisions (or equivalents) held in reserve by the large unit commander..."⁵

In the context of AFCENT as a theater of operations, large unit commanders will be viewed as the commander in chief of AFCENT (CINCENT) and the two subordinate army group commanders. It is hoped that this paper will provide some general insights concerning the concept of operational reserves. However, it is not intended to be either exhaustive in its examination of the adequacy of AFCENT's defensive campaign as a whole nor prescriptive in its recommendations.

Rather, its focus is on the key considerations associated with the creation and employment of operational reserves by AFCENT in its defense against a no notice or short notice (from as little as a few hours to perhaps 2 weeks) Warsaw Pact conventional attack.

The paper is organized into six sections. The first section is the introduction. The second section contains the problem background. The first part presents the strategic and operational framework in which AFCENT must conduct its defensive campaign. The second part is an overview of the present debate concerning the need for larger operational reserves in AFCENT. The third section contains a general discussion of the notion of operational reserves as presented by Clausewitz. This is followed by a presentation of how FM 100-5 views the role of operational reserves in a defensive campaign. The fourth section is a historical examination of how operational reserves were used in three World War II defensive campaigns. The fifth section is an analysis of these campaigns in light of the views of Clausewitz and FM 100-5. The sixth section presents implications for AFCENT based on the previous analysis.

While this paper may arguably contain many implicit assumptions, there is one significantly explicit one. Namely, there will be no major changes either in the present NATO force structure in AFCENT or its overall strategy specifically in regard to the political guideline of forward defense.

II. Problem Background

AFCENT is a joint (land/air) and combined operational headquarters charged with the defense of the central region of NATO. AFCENT has direct command over two army groups, NORTHAG and CENTAG, which command eight corps and one brigade group provided by six nations. AFCENT also commands Allied Air Forces Central Europe (AAFCE) consisting of the 2d and 4th⁶ Allied Tactical Air Forces (ATAFs).

Prior to presenting the operational framework of AFCENT's defensive campaign, an overview of the strategic framework in which AFCENT must operate is presented. As described by General Chalupa (the CINCENT), AFCENT's mission is threefold. The first and most important mission is the prevention of war through deterrence. Second, given that deterrence has failed, AFCENT is charged with a "direct defense of the Region as close to its eastern borders as possible" in order to⁷ "maintain or restore the integrity of NATO territory." The⁸ third mission is flexible response.

Within this strategic framework, General Chalupa has described AFCENT's operational concept as follows. Initially, a strong covering force would be employed to determine the⁹ Warsaw Pact's main threat and allow main forces to deploy. Subsequently, the main defense would stop the enemy in an area of limited depth. Reserves would then be used to conduct counterattacks to destroy penetrations and restore the IGB. Currently, assuming adequate warning and timely arrival, the only substantial maneuver reserve available to AFCENT is the III (US) Corps with an equivalent strength of approximately 3

and 1/2 divisions. Additionally, the ground campaign would be coordinated with an air effort designed to achieve and maintain a favorable air situation and simultaneously conduct a follow on attack of Warsaw Pact forces (FOFA).¹⁰ Concurrently, major commands within AFCENT would also conduct rear area security operations with the help of national territorial commands.

In a no notice or short notice conventional Warsaw Pact attack, AFCENT would be required to meet and defeat a massive and rapid attack by heavily mechanized forces. This attack would be designed to create confusion for the military and the governments in order to preempt AFCENT's forward defenses and force AFCENT to fight a series of meeting engagements for which it is ill prepared. The Warsaw Pact would concentrate overwhelming combat power at selected points to achieve one or several breakthroughs. These would be followed up by echeloned mobile forces attempting to exploit through the gaps into AFCENT's operational depths to prevent reaction and reinforcement in a timely manner and, in effect to present AFCENT and NATO with a fait accompli.¹¹

General Chalupa has noted that, even if Allied forces include the French, the Warsaw Pact would enjoy an initial overall advantage of 2:1 in land forces which would climb to 3:1 in a matter of weeks. In air assets, the Warsaw Pact¹² would enjoy a 2.5:1 advantage from the outset. In addition to the unfavorable balance of forces, a lack of operational depth poses another significant problem for AFCENT. As can be

seen on the map at Appendix A, a Warsaw Pact penetration of 100 kms into Jutland would sever the Danish peninsula from AFCENT. A penetration of 200 kms along the NORTHAG/CENTAG border would split AFCENT, cut many of the corps lines of communication, and breach the Rhine River (the last operationally significant geographic barrier in Europe prior to the the Pyrennees). A penetration of 300 kms would cause the loss of all the major Belgian and Netherlands channel ports. Finally, another substantial challenge for AFCENT and its subordinate army groups centers on the less than optimal prewar positioning of several of the national corps (primarily the Netherlands and Belgian corps) and the equally significant challenge of coordinating a campaign with national corps which differ in equipment, force structure, logistics, training, and doctrine. It is within this context that AFCENT must develop a conventional defensive campaign

...that is not a thin blue line, that is flexible in its approach, that does use mobility and has a counterattack capability that is consistent with doctrine, and, above all, still achieves NATO's political objectives. 13

In recent years, critics (see endnote 4) have become increasingly concerned over what they view as essentially a linear defense along the border with insufficient operational reserves. The result, in their view, will be a defensive campaign of attrition which AFCENT, and by definition NATO, with its overall inferiority in manpower and equipment, is destined to lose. As an alternative, these critics have proposed that AFCENT adopt a more maneuver oriented approach essentially along the lines of a mobile defense. Using this

approach, forces along the border would be significantly decreased in order to create one or several large operational reserves which would deliver decisive counterattacks to destroy Warsaw Pact forces which had penetrated into the depths of AFCENT's defenses. As noted in FM 100-5, the focus of the mobile defense is

...on the destruction of the attacking force by permitting the enemy to advance into a position which exposes him to counterattack and envelopment by a mobile reserve. 14

Typically, this type of defense requires mobility equal to or greater than the attacker, a static element to control the depth and, more importantly, the width of the penetration, and a relatively large reserve. By contrast, in an area defense the focus is

...on the retention of terrain by absorbing the enemy into an interlocked series of positions from which he can be destroyed largely by fire. 15

Relative to a mobile defense, mobile reserves in an area defense are smaller and are controlled at lower levels to cover gaps and execute local counterattacks. Normally, this type of defense requires less depth than a mobile defense. As FM 100-5 notes, each type of defense is not pure. Both contain static and dynamic elements. The difference is largely in the balance between the two. 16 Additionally, in AFCENT's overall theater of operations, it is probable that subordinate units would employ several defenses which are variations of these two general defensive schemes. 17

In presenting their argument, proponents who advocate a more maneuver oriented approach invariably argue for larger

operational reserves. Maurer and McCormick suggest that a mobile defense requires a sizeable operational reserve corps of several divisions. This force would be held far enough back from the initial fighting to avoid being committed piecemeal and losing its freedom of movement. It would be employed to deal with major penetrations which "local" reserves could not handle and could also be used to initiate a subsequent counteroffensive.¹⁸

In a similar vein, Von Mellenthin et al. in NATO Under Attack suggest that approximately half of NATO's forces should be committed to a strongpoint or positional type of defense well forward. The remainder would be formed into mobile operational reserves used by corps and army level commanders to "annihilate" penetrating Soviet divisions and reestablish the IGB.¹⁹

To a degree, these proponents have confused the issue by combining what an operational reserve is with how, where, and when it is used, and for what purpose. This apparent confusion concerning what operational reserves are notwithstanding, one thing these critics share is a concern that AFCEM lacks the operational reserves needed to conduct a successful defense. As Karber suggests however, "The reason NATO does not have such a quantity of reserves is not due to a lack of perceived need, but the absence of the manpower and financial resources necessary to supply them."²⁰ Thus, these critics inadequately address a more fundamental issue concerning operational reserves. General Chalupa summarizes

this when he states that "...if they (larger operational reserves) are constituted at the expense of forward deployment, the advantages gained and disadvantages incurred must be carefully examined."²¹ Prior to undertaking an examination of these advantages and disadvantages, a general theoretical and doctrinal review of operational reserves will be presented.

III. The Theoretical and Doctrinal Concept of Operational Reserves

In his classic theoretical treatise On War, Clausewitz²² presents his views on what he terms strategic reserves. In Clausewitz's view, reserves serve two purposes. One is to prolong and/or renew a given action, the other is to counter unforeseen threats. In either case, he argues that these functions are more properly performed by tactical and not strategic reserves. As he notes

While a tactical reserve is a means not only of meeting any unforeseen maneuver by the enemy but also of reversing the unpredictable outcome of combat when this becomes necessary, strategy must renounce this means...Setbacks in one area can, as a rule, be offset only by achieving gains elsewhere, and in a few cases by transferring troops from one area to another. Never must it occur to a strategist to deal with such a setback by holding forces in reserve.²³

This view of strategic reserves is entirely consistent with Clausewitz's notion of economy of force, a view significantly different from the more classic idea that economy of force involves the allocation of the minimum force in support of secondary efforts. In Clausewitz's view,

economy of force requires that "...all forces are involved-
always to ensure that no part of the whole is idle." ²⁴

Hence, Clausewitz sees a strategic reserve as having progressively less utility the less specific and more general its anticipated purpose is, and thus, the more reactive it becomes. As a final caution, Clausewitz suggests that the concept of a strategic reserve may even become self contradictory. This occurs when, as he writes

...the decisive stage of the battle has been reached. All forces must be used to achieve it, and any idea of reserves, of available combat units that are not meant to be used until after the decision, is an absurdity. ²⁵

Having briefly examined a theoretical concept of operational reserves, attention will now turn to the doctrinal approach taken in our army's cornerstone operational manual concerning the use of operational reserves in a defensive campaign.

FM 100-5, Operations, notes that the most critical decision for the large unit commander is how to deal with the enemy's operational reserve and when to commit his own. ²⁶ It further states that in the defense, "The primary purpose of reserves...is to preserve the commander's flexibility." ²⁷ In this regard, FM 100-5 presents a list of possible uses for an operational reserve which includes exploiting either a tactical success or an enemy vulnerability, seizing the operational initiative by executing a counterattack or counteroffensive, reinforcing forward defensive operations or blocking enemy penetrations, and finally reacting to rear area threats. As a further caution FM 100-5 notes that to be used

decisively, the operational reserve should not be committed piecemeal to deal with tactical emergencies, but employed in mass.²⁸ Finally, FM 100-5 notes that the primary use of an operational reserve, to include its size, composition, and by implication its positioning, must derive directly from the type of defense being employed.

While Clausewitz and FM 100-5 have some somewhat different views concerning the utility of operational reserves, collectively they provide an excellent background against which three World War II defensive campaigns can be examined.

IV. Historical Case Studies

In presenting the following three case studies, the intent is not to provide a means of proving or disproving the views of either Clausewitz or FM 100-5 concerning operational reserves. Rather, it is intended that as a comparatively recent group of defensive campaigns conducted at the operational level, these case studies collectively will provide some additional insights concerning the creation and use of operational reserves.

A. The Defensive Campaign of Army Group Don. In November 1942, the Soviets were able to affect a major breakthrough and surround the German Sixth Army in Stalingrad. This developed into a general Soviet counteroffensive designed to destroy the Sixth Army and force the Germans back to the west. In an attempt to restore the situation, Hitler placed Field Marshall Erich Von Manstein in command of Army Group Don. After the

abortive attempt of his Fourth Panzer Army to relieve Stalingrad in December, Von Manstein's army group faced increased pressure from the Soviet counteroffensive as it and Army Group A to its south attempted to avoid being cut off from their supply lines along the Dnieper while still maintaining a viable defense ²⁹ (see the map at Appendix B). What followed during the winter of 1943/44 is a classic example of a successfully conducted defensive campaign at the operational level.

Von Manstein was faced with several problems. First, he was significantly outnumbered in both men and materiel during the entire period. This was further complicated by the fact that, as a result of tremendous losses sustained in his army group, he and his subordinates were forced to create various impromptu command arrangements such as Army Detachment Hollidt. Second, the Soviets had a shorter distance to the German southern wing lifelines (Rostov and the Dnieper crossings) than many of the German units, particularly those in Army Group A. To compound the problem, Von Manstein's defense had to be structured around his relatively immobile ³⁰ infantry units and not his comparatively few panzer units. Third, Hitler's obsession of refusing to give up ground without providing the stiffest of resistance made it even more difficult for Von Manstein to wage a successful defensive campaign at the operational level.

While Von Manstein was able to achieve a limited degree of stability when the First Panzer Army was withdrawn from Army Group A in the Caucasus and placed in the center of his

sector, his operations in December and January can best be described as expedients designed to prevent a catastrophic breakthrough in what essentially amounted to an attritional campaign. Although the Germans were occasionally able to seize the tactical initiative, the operational initiative remained firmly with the Soviets. During this entire period, Army Group Don operated without any operational reserves to speak of. The situation was not much better with Von Manstein's subordinate commanders. The four panzer divisions in Army Detachment Hollidt were never employed in mass. One was retained under the army detachment's operational control and the other three were doled out as fire brigades to support the infantry divisions.³¹ Units dispatched to Von Manstein's army group (including the SS Panzer Corps and its three panzer divisions) were also used to plug gaps and reinforce the shoulders of the army group as they arrived in an effort to stabilize the situation.

On the 29th of January, the Soviet Southwestern Front, consisting of four armies and a mobile group, launched a new offensive supported by the Voronezh Front on its right flank and the Southern Front on its left flank. The purpose of this offensive was to seize crossings over the Dnieper River and complete the destruction of Army Group Don and Army Group A to the south (see the map at Appendix C). The Soviets enjoyed an overall advantage of approximately 2:1 in infantry and 4:1 in armor (which was somewhat reduced as the remainder of the SS Panzer Corps arrived).³² Even as the Soviets' armored

spearheads were closing on the Dnieper crossings and threatening to destroy his army group, Von Manstein began to formulate a plan designed to stop the offensive by taking advantage of the superior skill the Germans possessed at this time over the Soviets in conducting maneuver warfare. If successful, this plan offered the Germans the opportunity to seize the operational initiative from the Soviets on the German southern wing as well.

Essentially, this plan involved shortening lines to free up sufficient mobile forces to execute a counterattack against what was anticipated to become the exposed flanks of an overextended Soviet penetration. As Von Manstein himself noted (in what is a classic summary of the operational art)

...all considerations of an operational nature are ultimately based---on appreciations or hypotheses regarding the course of action which the enemy may be expected to take. While no one can prove beforehand that a situation will develop in such-and-such a way, the only successful commander is the one who can think ahead. He must be able to see through the veil in which the enemy's future actions are always wrapped,...The greater one's sphere of command, of course, the further ahead one must think. 33

After Hitler begrudgingly gave permission for the plan on the 7th of February, Von Manstein began withdrawing his Fourth Panzer Army through Army Detachment Hollidt which had established a strong positional defense along the Mius River on Von Manstein's southern flank. As Von Manstein had correctly anticipated, the Soviet offensive became overextended as its mobile elements penetrated deep into Army Group South (renamed on the 12th of February) and came within 20 kms of Dnepropetrovsk and Von Manstein's logistical

lifeline. This, however, gave Von Manstein the opportunity to execute a double pronged counterattack conducted by the Fourth Panzer Army, consisting of the SS Panzer Corps in the north and the XLVIII Panzer Corps in the south. They were later joined by the LVII Panzer Corps from the First Panzer Army. This masterful counterstroke (as Von Manstein termed it) achieved decisive results by destroying the bulk of three armies and a mobile group, restoring the army group's position along the Don, and regaining the operational initiative along the German southern wing. In order to execute this counterstroke, Von Manstein accepted tremendous risk on his southern flank with Army Detachment Hollidt and on his northern flank with Army Detachment Lanz (later renamed Kempf) to create the necessary mobile forces.

While Von Manstein's largely centralized control and employment of mobile forces against the Soviet breakthrough achieved decisive results, there was not universal agreement among Germany's senior military leaders on the Eastern Front concerning the proper approach to take in defeating Soviet breakthroughs and penetrations.³⁴ In fact, a comment concerning the employment of operational reserves by Army Group South in its 1943 summer campaign vis-a-vis Hollidt's Sixth Army (which had been reconstituted) illustrates that perspective plays a considerable role where reserves are involved.

...these panzers were sent in piecemeal, first one division, then a second, and finally an entire corps...Since strategic reserves were urgently needed at other points along the army

group front, they were sent in at the last moment and only for a limited time. Consequently, at decisive moments, General Hollidt's freedom of action was seriously hampered by the pressure of time, and decisions were made which might have been different had the reserves been unconditionally at the army's disposal. 35

B. The Defensive Campaign in the Ardennes. In November 1944, the Allies' offensive had brought them to the borders of Germany. At the Maastricht conference in early December, the senior allied commanders had arrived at a general operational scheme along the following lines. (see the map at Appendix D) Montgomery's 21st Army Group would continue to attack to seize crossings over the Rhine and envelop the Ruhr Basin from the north. Simpson's Ninth Army (currently in Bradley's 12th Army Group) would go to Montgomery in early January. Bradley's 12th Army Group would continue to attack with Hodges First Army seizing crossings over the Roer and then the Rhine to envelop the Ruhr Basin from the south. Patton's Third Army, supported by Patch's Seventh Army or Dever's 6th Army Group, would continue its attack to close on and subsequently seize crossings over the Rhine farther south. 36

In Hodge's First Army, the seizure of the Roer Valley dams was essential to a successful closing and subsequent crossing of the Rhine. To accomplish this, Gerow's V Corps attacked on 13 December in the First Army's center to seize several critical Roer dams. To the north, Collin's VII Corps made a supporting attack. In the southern sector of the First Army, Middleton's VIII Corps was given the mission of training, resting, and re-equipping after its bloody battles in the

Huertgen Forest. The VIII Corps (with the equivalent of four divisions) was given a front of approximately 140 kms which was almost three times larger than what was then⁴¹ considered normal by US doctrine for an equivalent force.

In reserve, Middleton had only one armored combat command and four engineer battalions. Other than some additional engineer battalions, Hodge's First Army had no reserves to speak of. Similarly, Bradley's 12th Army Group had no operational reserves. However, he did have a plan which envisioned sending uncommitted forces from Simpson's Ninth Army and Patton's Third Army to support Hodges in Middleton's sector if the need arose. Finally, no substantial reserves existed at Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force (SHAEF). Although the XVIII Airborne Corps (with the 101st and 82d Airborne Divisions) was formally designated as SHAEF reserve, it was in a rather poor state after Montgomery's³⁹ abortive Operation Market Garden. As Cole notes, the issue of a SHAEF reserve had come up in early December when Eisenhower had directed that a strategic reserve be created and placed under the 12th Army Group for employment only at his direction to exploit a success in the upcoming allied offensive. Up to this point in time, SHAEF had tended to view troops arriving on the continent as reserves. In mid December, two infantry divisions had just gone into the line and two more infantry divisions and an armored division were⁴⁰ enroute from England.

Although Eisenhower was aware of Middleton's overextended corps in Hodge's sector, Weigley suggests that he saw the

risk clearly and accepted it for two reasons. First, he did not want to strip combat power from the offensives occurring to the north and south of the VIII Corps. Second, his style of leadership did not allow him to interfere with his subordinates, in this case Bradley and Hodges. On the other hand, Weigley suggests that "The risk to which Bradley subjected the VIII Corps on its long Ardennes front was not⁴¹ the carefully calculated one he later made it to be."

Additionally, Eisenhower and his senior subordinate commanders felt that while the Germans had some mobile reserves available, they were not sufficient in number to pose a major threat, particularly in the area of the Eifel and Ardennes where Middleton's corps was deployed. In this regard, there has been a great deal of discussion concerning the successful German deception effort and the associated Allied intelligence failure. Suffice it to say that collectively, considering the time, location, size, and method, the German counteroffensive achieved significant surprise at the tactical, operational, and even the strategic level.

The German counteroffensive which struck on 16 December was Hitler's last major effort of the war to restore the strategic initiative on the Western Front. It was designed to penetrate the thinly held sector of the allied lines in the Ardennes, isolate the British/Canadian 21st Army Group from the American 12th Army Group and ultimately capture Antwerp. Under the control of Model's Army Group B, five armored and

twelve infantry divisions, controlled by three armies, were concentrated along a 60 mile assault front opposed by only four and a half American divisions spread out over almost 100 miles. By the beginning of January, the Germans would commit a total of eight armored and twenty infantry divisions. The allies (almost exclusively American) were to commit eight armored, sixteen infantry, and two airborne divisions to the battle.⁴²

Despite the initial surprise, several immediate actions taken by the allied chain of command proved decisive in stabilizing the penetration. One was the action taken by Gerow's V Corps in taking up defensive positions along the northern shoulder of the penetration. Another was the decision by Middleton, supported by Hodges, to stay put and defend the critical road junctions at St Vith, Bastogne, and Houffalize. In this regard, the immediate actions taken by Bradley, encouraged by Eisenhower, to reinforce Hodges with Simpson's 7th Armored Division in the north and Patton's 10th Armored Division in the south were invaluable. While Bradley and to a lesser extent Eisenhower were somewhat slow to grasp the magnitude of the German effort, they did not withhold forces until the situation was more fully clarified. In fact, on the 17th Eisenhower released his only reserve to Bradley who in turn released it to Hodges. As a result of these and other immediate actions, approximately 60,000 men and 11,000 vehicles had arrived or were moving to reinforce Hodge's First Army by midnight on the 17th.⁴³ Committing units from SHAEF and army group down to army and lower levels was entirely

consistent with what, as a result of weather, terrain, and initial confusion, emerged as an area defense conducted in a series of somewhat decentralized regimental, division, and corps actions.

Even while Bradley and Hodges were attempting to stabilize the situation, Eisenhower saw the opportunity to achieve what the allies had failed to achieve in the fall, the decisive destruction of German forces west of the Rhine. Having correctly decided to release his reserves and put the execution of the current battle in the hands of his army and army group commanders, Eisenhower and his staff were able to focus on the sequencing necessary to make his operational plan a reality. First, to ease command and control problems, a boundary change was effected which placed all forces north of the penetration under Montgomery's control. Second, Eisenhower decided to execute a counteroffensive with Patton's Third Army in the south and Collins's VII Corps in the north to destroy German units trapped in the pocket. These units would then be concentrated to continue the attack east across the Rhine and into Germany. In order to accomplish this, Eisenhower directed Dever's 6th Army Group to shift laterally to the north and assume a large portion of Patton's front. This entailed considerable risk since this provided the opportunity for German units who had been dormant in the Colmar pocket to become active. Therefore, Eisenhower further directed that Devers should be prepared to withdraw west to the Vosges if necessary to preserve his force and prevent

distractions to the SHAEF main effort farther north.

The immediate actions taken by the allied senior leadership, the ability to rapidly task organize at the tactical level, and the tactical skill demonstrated by most American units in what was essentially a series of static positional defenses combined to provide a very effective area defense which threw off the German timetable and kept the depth and, more importantly, the width of the penetration manageable.

45

Unfortunately, the allied counteroffensive did not achieve the same degree of success that Von Manstein's did. To a certain extent, this is attributable to the fact that the Germans, unlike the Soviets, did not allow themselves to become overextended and had actually assumed hasty defensive positions on the flanks. Also, the terrain in the Ardennes, unlike the steppes of the Ukraine, was not suited to large scale maneuver warfare. Even so, the allied counteroffensive suffered from a lack of skill in execution. It was directed at the waist rather than the shoulders of the penetration. Additionally, it resembled more a broad front attack designed to push the enemy back rather than a violent counterstroke intended to annihilate him. This suggests that, as some have claimed, the American army had still failed to master the operational art of maneuver warfare.

46

C. The Defense of the Atlantic Wall. The German defense of the Atlantic wall is a particularly valuable analytical tool since many of the issues surrounding the creation and use of operational reserves are captured in the classic debate

which emerged between Von Rundstedt, the Commander-in-Chief West, and Rommel, the commander of Army Group B.

Von Rundstedt favored a more maneuver oriented mobile type defense. His operational concept envisioned the creation of a four to five panzer division mobile reserve formed as a panzer group under his control. This force was intended to launch a massive counterattack designed to annihilate the allied main landing forces after they had moved inland within the first few days after the landings. ⁴⁷

In Von Rundstedt's view, the strategic mobility advantage of the allies, reinforced by recent events in Sicily and Anzio, allowed them tremendous freedom regarding the time and place of the landings. Von Rundstedt was concerned that by placing his mobile reserves in the hands of the local commanders, they would be committed prematurely against what was only a feint or supporting attack and would no longer be available for the main landing. Further Von Rundstedt, along with others such as Guderian (Inspector General of Mechanized Forces) and Von Schweppenburg (Commander of Von Rundstedt's panzer troops), felt that any local sector reserves would not be sufficient to defeat an allied landing in their sector if it did prove to be the main landing. ⁴⁸

Additionally, it was felt that the operational reserves had to be far enough removed from the coast to avoid their being subjected to the allied bombardment and more important, to prevent their premature and indecisive commitment to a local tactical action. This large operational reserve also had

to be centrally positioned with access to a good road and rail net in order to respond to the main landing in a timely manner. Paris was proposed as the logical choice. Von Rundstedt was aware of the Allies' overwhelming air superiority, however, he was assured that significant air support would be provided to him once the landings occurred. Additionally, it was felt that by moving at night and taking adequate provisions for road repairs and alternate river crossings, Von Rundstedt's operational reserves would still be able to maintain freedom of movement.

Prior to examining Rommel's views concerning the defense of the Atlantic wall, it is necessary to comment on the somewhat unique command arrangement which existed between Von Rundstedt and himself. Initially, Rommel found himself in a largely supervisory role. This was formally changed in November 1943 when he was made the commander of Army Group B under Von Rundstedt. However, while Rommel was formally under Von Rundstedt, as a field marshall, he was also accorded the privilege of direct access to Hitler, a privilege of which he took full advantage.

Rommel favored a more forward positional defense oriented on the retention of terrain. In his view, the first day of the landings would be critical. His reasoning was that since the defending forces along the coast were comparatively light, the enemy would probably succeed in creating a bridgehead wherever he chose. As he noted

Once this happened it will only be by the rapid intervention of our operational reserves that he will be thrown back into the sea. This requires

that these forces (mobile reserves) be held very close behind the coast defences. 51

Rommel's views were reinforced by two other factors. First, he had experienced first hand the effects of allied airpower in North Africa and Italy. In his opinion, if mobile forces were not positioned close to the front initially, they would never be able to get there. Second, Rommel was particularly concerned that German forces in the west in general, and the mobile reserves in particular, no longer possessed the training and experience needed to execute a maneuver oriented defense.

Unfortunately for the Germans, the final plan proved to be a disastrous compromise. The panzer divisions were actually placed under several different commands and were positioned in an attempt to satisfy all concerned (see the map at Appendix F). Four panzer divisions were kept under the control of OKW. Three were under Rommel's control. Three were under the control of Army Group G. Von Rundstedt and his panzer commander, Von Schweppenburg, initially had no mobile reserves under their control. 52 As events would prove, the compromise satisfied no one. The dispersion and decentralized control deprived Von Rundstedt of the ability to conduct a massed counterattack as he had envisioned. However, there was still a large enough mobile force held in the rear under higher control to deprive Rommel of the operational flexibility he needed to execute his forward defense.

The actions taken by the Germans after the allied landings proved equally disastrous. Once the initial landings were discovered, Von Rundstedt asked for and received release

of the 12th Panzer and Panzer Lehr divisions. Interestingly, he immediately released these to Rommel who in turn committed them in a somewhat piecemeal fashion, in large part because of the very allied air effort Rommel had been concerned with.

An obvious question is why Von Rundstedt did not wait an additional day or two to mass the mobile force required to execute his decisive counterattack. Given his actions, it might be argued that he should simply have adopted Rommel's approach to begin with.⁵³ It is equally interesting that even after the initial landings, a large portion of the mobile reserves and the bulk of the Fifteenth Army were not committed to Normandy until well into July. These actions are largely explained by the fact that Rommel, Hitler, and to a certain extent Von Rundstedt remained convinced that Normandy was not the main effort. As a result, a kind of mental paralysis set in which prevented the German high command from taking decisive action when it was warranted. When these units were finally committed, it was merely in time to be swallowed up in⁵⁴ the allied breakout and encirclement in July and August.

V. Analysis

The previous case studies confirm that, as noted in FM 100-5, the size, composition, and mission of the reserves is driven by the type of defense itself. However, these case studies also suggest that there are other equally important factors which affect the operational commander's employment of reserves in his defensive campaign.

Both Von Manstein and Bradley (in actuality, primarily

Hodges) were conducting essentially an area defense at the operational level. While Von Manstein's defense tended to emphasize maneuver and Bradley's tended to emphasize firepower, each incorporated a mixture of static and dynamic elements. Additionally, although intermediate actions were directed towards the destruction of the enemy force, of primary concern to both was the retention of terrain. In Von Manstein's case, political restrictions precluded him from abandoning large portions of territory (at least initially). Additionally, since the majority of his force was relatively immobile infantry units, he was forced to rely on a static positional type of defense, particularly on the shoulders. For the allies, a lack of depth was the primary factor which forced Eisenhower and his subordinates to orient on the retention of terrain to deny the Germans the Meuse crossings. In contrast, it was a genuine lack of agreement concerning the type of defense to adopt which resulted in the disastrous compromise by the Germans defending France in 1944.

Of particular interest is the manner in which reserves were used in the overall defense. Von Manstein never operated with a reserve in the sense that he never retained a force under his control merely for contingencies. Necessity dictated that every bit of his combat power be applied simultaneously. In this regard, allied actions in the Ardennes were similar. Faced with a confusing situation as the result of a largely successful German deception effort, Eisenhower and his subordinate commanders chose not to retain

reserves until the situation became clearer and more stable. Rather, they correctly judged that a combination of weather, terrain, and confusion dictated that this battle would be fought and won (or lost) at the division and corps level. Thus, they correctly chose to reinforce their subordinate commanders. This allowed the corps and army commanders to fight the current battle while Bradley and Eisenhower focused on the follow on planning and sequencing. None of the American or German operational commanders ever appeared to reconstitute an operational reserve simply for the sake of having one. Rather, each realized that what was called for was, as Clausewitz suggested, the simultaneous use of force at the decisive moment. Additionally, the employment of the Fourth Panzer Army by Von Manstein illustrates another critical factor concerning the notion of operational reserves in the defense, mobility.

Mobility, as applied to reserves, encompasses more than basic technological considerations. As then Col Abrams stated, the term mobility includes additional factors such as organization, command and control, and logistics.⁵⁵ In fact, the notion of mobility very closely parallels the concept of agility-the ability to act more rapidly than your opponent. Thus, as FM 100-5 states, agility (and by implication mobility) depends as much on mental as it does physical⁵⁶ qualities.

Von Manstein was able to take advantage of what some have referred to as a mobility differential-"the capacity for an armed force to move on the battlefield faster than its

opponent". Though Von Manstein did not enjoy a technological mobility advantage, his army group enjoyed a significant advantage, relative to the Soviets, in the conduct of large scale maneuver warfare due to its superiority in doctrine, training, and command and control. Additionally, the steppes of the Ukraine were ideal for the employment of large maneuver formations. Finally, and probably most important, Von Manstein enjoyed an advantage over his opponent in his ability to anticipate and correctly sequence the actions required to regain the operational initiative. In this regard, he realized that time-distance factors required greater anticipation at the operational than the tactical level. This further suggests that the larger the operational reserve is, the greater the mobility differential must be. As Von Manstein himself noted, the essence of the operational commander's job is his ability to anticipate. This notion of anticipation is embodied in what Clausewitz has referred to as

58

genius. Both Von Manstein and to a lesser degree, Eisenhower demonstrated this quality. Von Rundstedt and Rommel did not.

Genius notwithstanding, it should be remembered that the threat facing Von Rundstedt and Rommel was quite different than that facing Eisenhower and Von Manstein. The latter two, particularly Von Manstein, were facing essentially a single and relatively clearly defined threat. The German high command tasked with defending France was faced with an opponent capable of executing multiple threats. This suggests that the

ability to employ large operational reserves becomes increasingly limited and less useful the greater the potential of the enemy to affect multiple threats (whether real or perceived). The greater the relative force imbalance, the more difficult this becomes. Unless the defender has sufficient forces to constitute several operational reserves, he will have to create the conditions required to deal with multiple threats sequentially. One of the most critical factors in this regard is the ability to accept risk.

Both Eisenhower and to an even greater degree Von Manstein had to accept risk to conduct their defensive campaigns and their subsequent counterstrokes. Eisenhower extended Dever's army group front laterally to free up Patton's Third Army to conduct its counterattack. Von Manstein deprived his subordinate commanders, particularly Hollidt, of their flexibility in order to mass the mobile forces needed to execute his counterstroke. While the counterattacks of the Fourth Panzer Army and to a lesser degree Patton's Third Army succeeded, it should be remembered that they were taking significant risks. In particular, if Von Manstein's counterattack had failed by, for example being struck itself by follow-on Soviet units or being denied freedom of movement due to poor weather or enemy air, the results would have been catastrophic. Thus, while the employment of large operational reserves offers the potential for decisive results, it also places the commander in the position of losing catastrophically if it fails.

Of course, as demonstrated by the Germans in France in

1944, a compromise is equally disastrous. By attempting to be strong everywhere to cover all contingencies and as a result not accepting risk, neither Von Rundstedt nor Rommel had operational flexibility. It can be argued that the single greatest fault of the Germans was their unwillingness to identify their main effort from the start and accept risk elsewhere. By not doing so they appeared to fall victim to Clausewitz's greatest concern; namely, that operational reserves (or in his words strategic reserves) become less useful the more general their intended purpose. Additionally, when the decisive moment did arrive, the higher operational commanders failed to see it. Rather, they chose to wait instead for a perceived threat which never came.

FM 100-5 notes that in the defense, the greatest value of a reserve is its ability to provide the commander flexibility. However, the preceding analysis has shown that flexibility can be a two edged sword. Ignoring the largely trivial case where the defender's and the attacker's strengths are approximately equal, an operational commander who provides himself flexibility through the creation of a large operational reserve almost invariably does so at a cost. In many cases, this is an associated loss of flexibility for subordinates. Factors such as greater depth, a mobility differential, proper anticipation, and a careful assessment of risk may obviate this. However, it appears that this becomes increasingly more difficult the larger the operational reserve.

All of this suggests that, consistent with Clausewitz's

notion of economy of force-- the simultaneous application of combat power at the decisive moment-- the notion of an operational reserve has the potential to become increasingly self-contradictory the higher the operational level. At the highest operational levels, the commander must first and foremost be concerned with the overall conduct of the campaign. In this regard, the higher operational commander achieves his flexibility not through the maintenance of a progressively larger operational reserve, but by other means. One means is the manner in which he accepts risk. Another is the manner in which he sequences battles and engagements and the degree to which he accurately anticipates the flow of the campaign and thus, forces his opponent to react to him. Still another means by which the operational commander achieves flexibility is the manner in which he reallocates resources such as air, logistics support, or reinforcements.

History suggests that the larger and more centrally controlled the operational reserve, the greater the need is for the operational commander to become involved with its employment. While FM 100-5 notes that this is the large unit commander's most critical decision, it appears that in many instances, this decision more properly belongs at the lower levels where the current battles are being fought. The higher operational commander is then free to focus on his primary concern, the sequencing of future engagements and battles.

All of this suggests that the classic notion of an operational reserve - a comparatively large force available for commitment by the operational commander- may have

progressively less utility the higher the operational level. Thus, a broader view may be more appropriate. Using less committed forces elsewhere by accepting risk, affecting a lateral boundary shift to free additional forces, or, consistent with political and geographic considerations, falling back and shortening lines are examples of this. Hence, it may be that the notion of operational reserves is not necessarily self contradictory, but rather, the concept of a reserve at the operational level is fundamentally different than the concept of a reserve at the tactical level.

VI. Implications for AFCENT

Consistent with the preceding analysis, there are some important implications for AFCENT regarding the concept of operational reserves in its defensive campaign. As noted by Karber (see page 8), the issue of operational reserves in AFCENT transcends the somewhat simplistic notion that more are needed. Given the relatively limited and somewhat mal-positioned conventional force structure in AFCENT, the real issue revolves around if and at what level operational reserves should be created and subsequently employed and whether the benefits exceed the cost.

In view of the preceding analysis, several factors suggest that the creation of a large centrally controlled operational reserve at AFCENT and, to a lesser extent, at army group level may not be appropriate. Further, it appears that for AFCENT, a different view is warranted concerning what

actually constitutes an operational reserve.

The general character of AFCENT's defensive campaign tends to negate the value of a large centrally controlled operational reserve. The absence of operational depth, coupled with the political guideline of forward defense requires that AFCENT must focus on the retention of terrain and the restoration of the IGB. This suggests a kind of area defense at the operational level. Consistent with this, there are several other factors which reinforce the notion that AFCENT's campaign will be somewhat decentralized and thus, not well suited to the employment of a large operational reserve.

The terrain in the Federal Republic of Germany, consisting of numerous built up areas, rugged forested areas, and water obstacles, makes the conduct of maneuver warfare by large multi-division operational reserves difficult. Additionally, despite the "stay put" policy, refugees and a lack of air superiority (at least in the initial days) will pose a significant movement problem. Finally, AFCENT's multinational structure, where each corps has a unique combination of equipment, organization, doctrine, training, and logistics, makes command and control extremely difficult. These factors collectively suggest that a large operational reserve employed by AFCENT does not possess the necessary mobility differential.

The preceding section also noted that the larger the operational reserve, the greater the requirement is both to accurately anticipate the opponents main effort and, more important, to be able to deal with it in a timely manner. In

this regard, the Warsaw Pact has the capability to present AFCENT with multiple threats. Even given a successful FOFA campaign, an AFCENT controlled reserve might still lack the mobility differential required to respond to these multiple threats. Additionally, depending on the degree of operational and strategic surprise the Warsaw Pact achieved, AFCENT could find itself fighting a series of decentralized division and corps meeting engagements. There would be a strong temptation here to hold back operational reserves while the situation became clearer. However, as was the case with the German defense of France, there is a very real danger that a kind of mental paralysis would set in while the higher operational commander tried to identify the main threat and determine that the decisive moment in the campaign to commit his reserves had in fact arrived. For AFCENT, the decisive moment, particularly in a no or short notice attack, arguably occurs almost immediately. Hence, continued waiting on the part of the operational commander could very well present the Warsaw Pact with a fait accompli. To this end, AFCENT should view the simultaneous use of force as a necessity. Holding combat power back at this level to preserve flexibility may merely offer AFCENT the opportunity to lose gracefully.

AFCENT must first and foremost be concerned with the conduct of its overall defensive campaign. However, the larger and more centrally controlled the operational reserve, the more the tendency exists for AFCENT to become involved in its employment. This tendency to focus on current operations

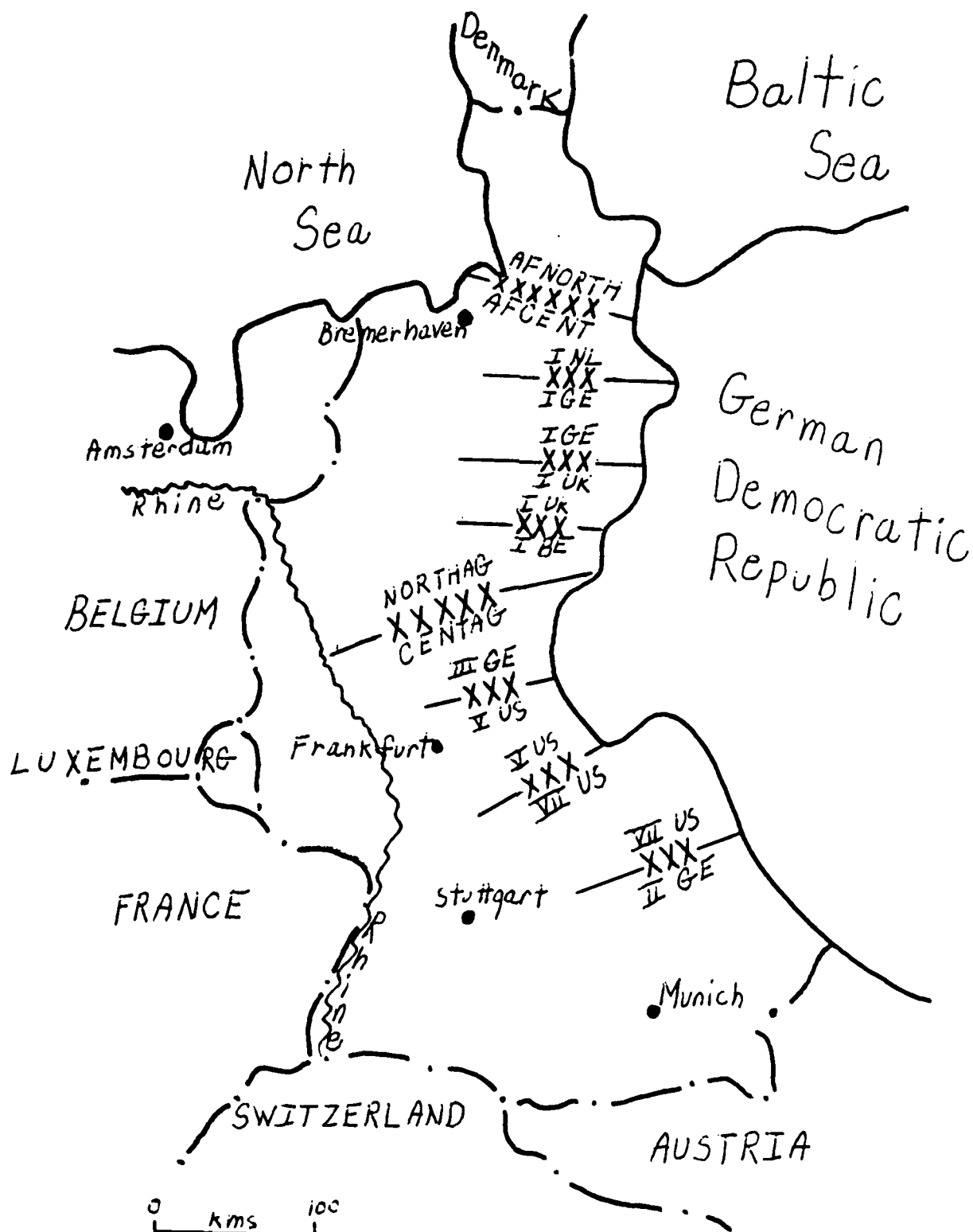
could deprive AFCENT of its ability to concentrate on its most important job, the proper sequencing of battles and engagements. In this context, the notion of reserves for AFCENT should be viewed differently than that of a corps or to a certain extent, even an army group. While a higher level operational command such as AFCENT must be concerned with preserving its flexibility, the maintenance of a large central reserve at the expense of the subordinate commands does not appear to be the best means to accomplish this. A more appropriate manner for AFCENT to preserve its operational flexibility is by properly sequencing its subordinates' battles. Consistent with this, another critical role for AFCENT involves the reallocation of resources. Air apportionment, controlling the FOFA campaign, redirecting logistic support, and reinforcements are four of the more important resources which AFCENT must properly allocate. There is one additional aspect of the defensive campaign where AFCENT must play a major role. That is in accepting risk.

To generate the combat power needed at the lower levels, AFCENT must properly integrate risk into its overall defensive campaign from the outset. One way which may not be feasible for AFCENT is by means of shortening its front line. Another way may be by extending the front of one subordinate command to free additional combat power. Even by doing this, it should be understood that the price to pay to generate a large enough force to be decisive even at a lower level may be the abandonment of Northern Germany to Bremerhaven or perhaps the abandonment of Bavaria (if only temporarily). As noted

earlier, as the size of the operational reserve is increased the potential to be decisive increases, but so does the potential to fail catastrophically. This in itself has implications for AFCENT and by definition, NATO. The inherently deliberate and somewhat slow decision making process which is an inevitable byproduct of combined operations may not be suited to dealing with the kind of risk entailed by the employment of a large operational reserve in what may be a one time affair, particularly if one examines the only logical choices if this fails. For AFCENT, the ability to accept this kind of risk is as much a political as a military decision, a discussion of which goes beyond the scope of this paper.

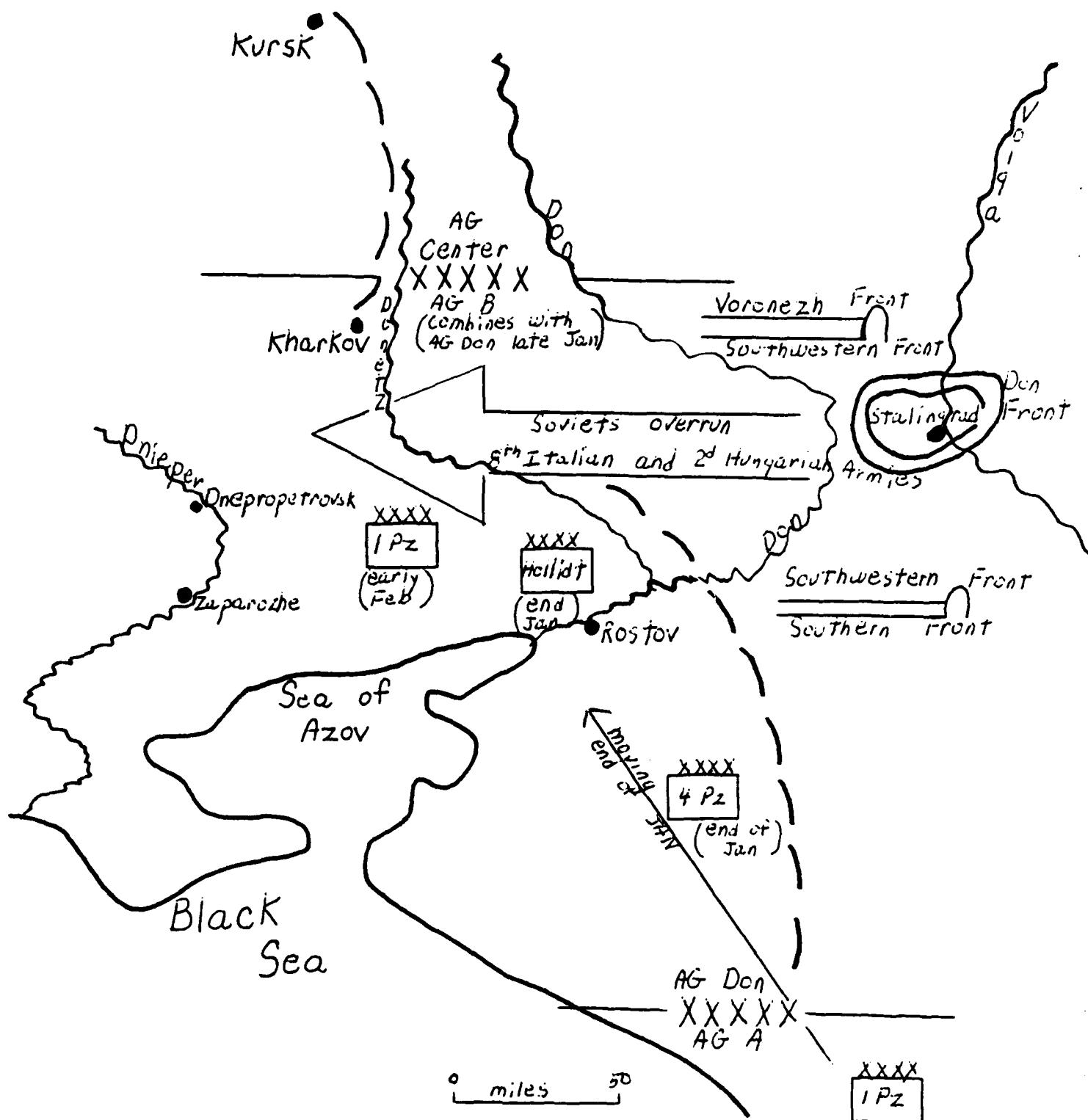
Unfortunately, critics who suggest that, without larger operational reserves, AFCENT will have to resort to a war of attrition, create a false dilemma. Within AFCENT's overall theater of operations and consistent with its general defensive concept, there is ample room for AFCENT's subordinates to conduct maneuver warfare. However, they cannot do this if a sizeable amount of the available combat power is withheld by higher operational commands. While the preceding analysis cannot be viewed as exhaustive, it does suggest that for AFCENT, the costs of creating a large operational reserve at the expense of its subordinate commands exceed the benefits.

APPENDIX A
AFCENT's Defensive Structure



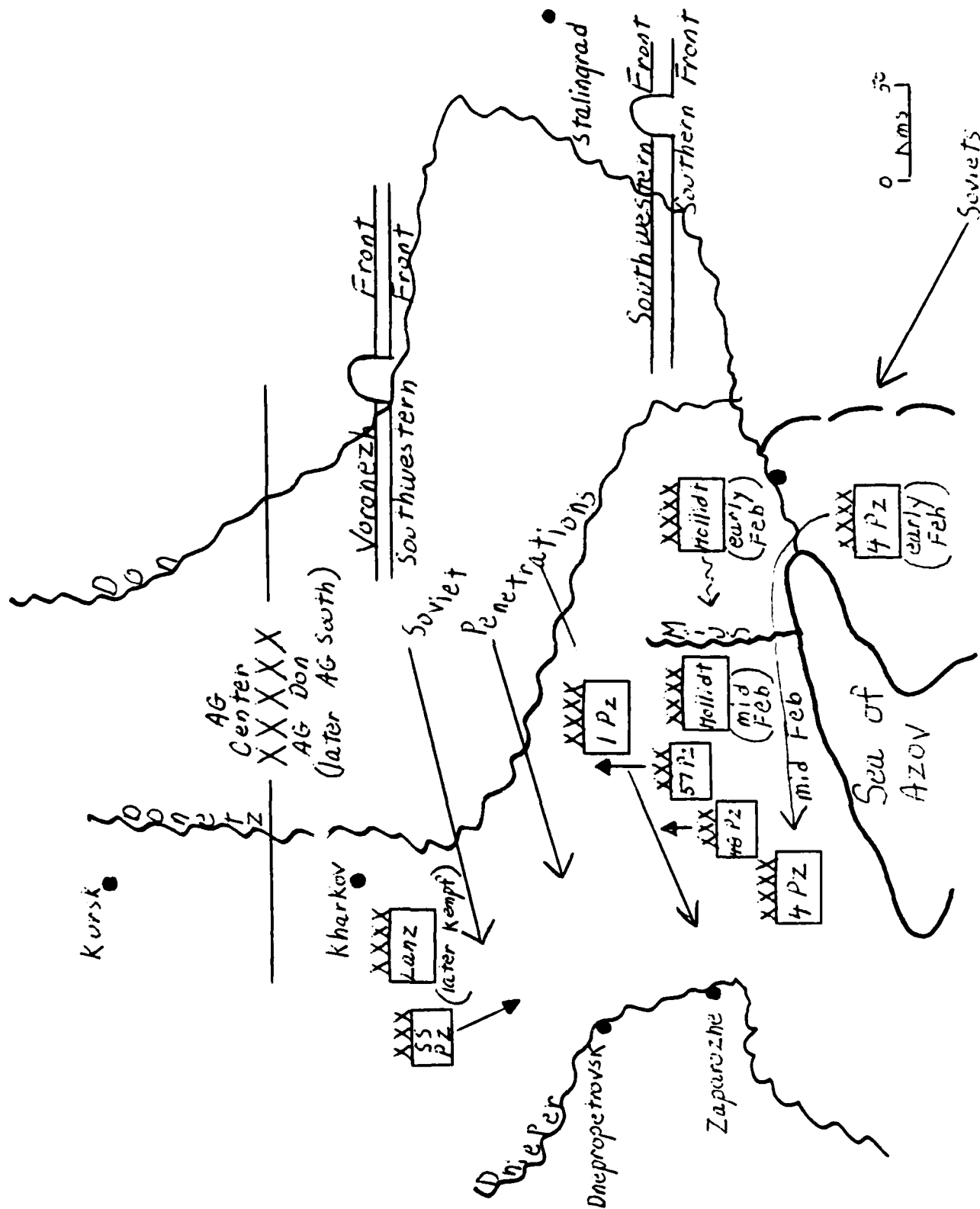
Source: Karber, Phillip A. "The Strategy: In Defense of Forward Defense." Armed Forces Journal International (May 84).

APPENDIX B
 Situation on the Eastern Front: December 1942-January 1943



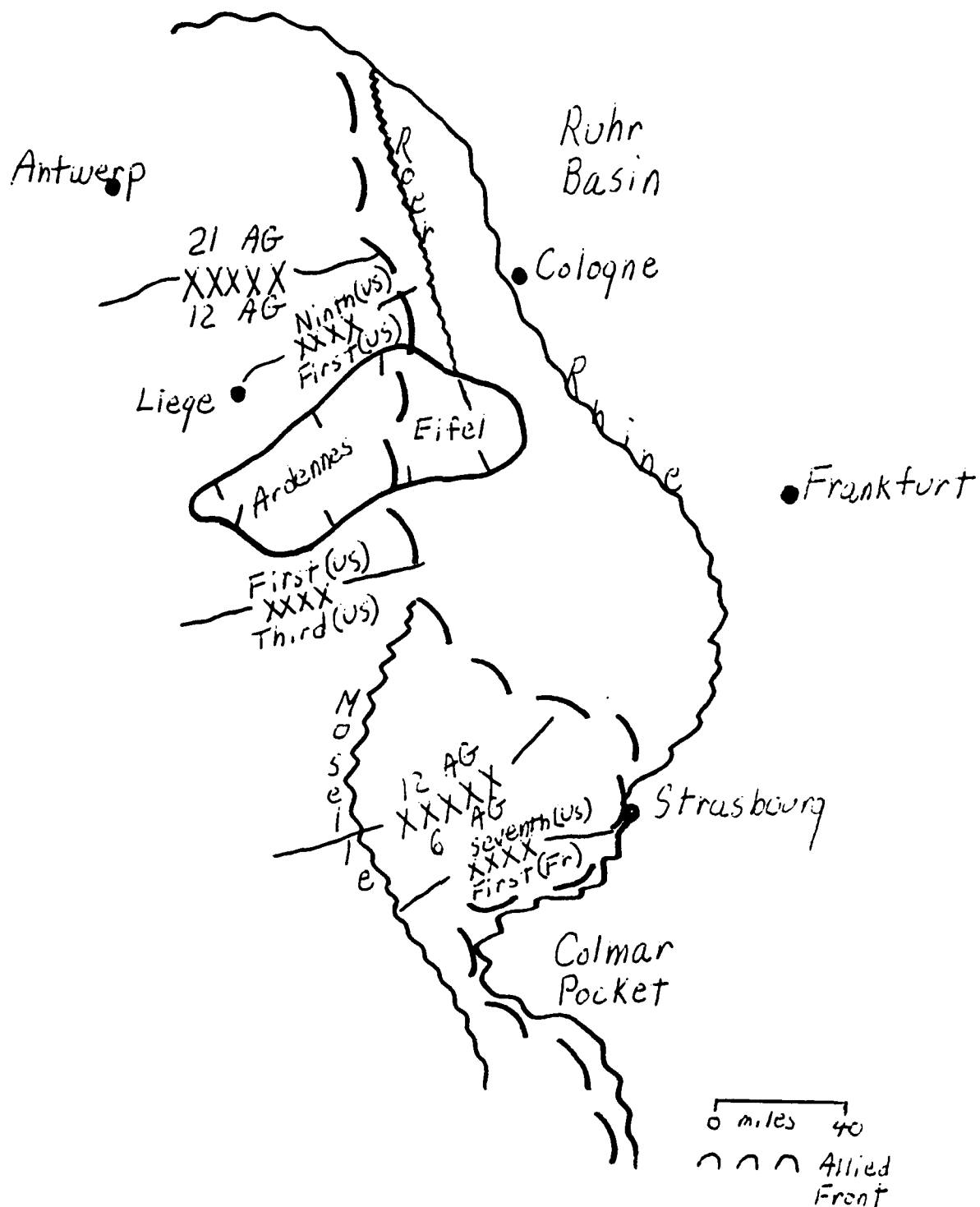
Source: Von Manstein, Field Marshall Erich. Lost Victories. p. 390.

APPENDIX C
 Situation on the Eastern Front: February 1943



Source: Von Manstein, Field Marshall Erich. Lost Victories. p. 430.

APPENDIX D
Allied Situation Early December 1944



Source: Cole, Hugh M. The Ardennes: Battle of the Bulge. p. 52.

Hand-drawn map of the Meuse River area, showing German and US positions on December 24 and 15, 1944.

Legend:

- German (Symbol: Box with 'X')
- US (Symbol: Box with 'X')
- Front 24 Dec (Symbol: Dotted line)
- Front 15 Dec (Symbol: Solid line)

Scale: 0 to 50 kms

Map Features:

- Meuse River:** Labeled along the bottom left.
- Aachen:** Located near the top left, with a German position (S, F, P, Z) and a US position (99).
- Liege:** Located near the bottom left, with a German position (S, F, P, Z) and a US position (106).
- Bastogne:** Located near the bottom right, with a German position (S, F, P, Z) and a US position (28).
- Other Positions:**
 - German positions: S, F, P, Z (multiple locations).
 - US positions: 99, 106, 28, 4.
- Fronts:**
 - Front 24 Dec (Dotted line).
 - Front 15 Dec (Solid line).

41

APPENDIX F
Disposition of German Panzer Units in France: June 1944



OKW Reserves	OB West	AG B	AG G
1 SS Pz	—	21 Pz	11 Pz
12 SS Pz		2 Pz	2 SS Pz
Pz Lehr		116 Pz	9 Pz
17 SS Pz Gd			

Source: Atlas of WWII, p. 171.

ENDNOTES

1. General Sir Nigel Bagnall, "Concepts of Land/Air Operations in the Central Region." RUSI Journal for Defense Studies (Sep 84) p. 60.

2. For an excellent summary of the concept of relational maneuver, see Edward N. Luttwak's article "The Operational Level of War," International Security (Winter 80/81) pp 61-79.

3. U.S. Department of the Army, Operations, FM 100-5 (Final Draft) (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1985) p. 2-3.

4. The following four references are a representative sampling of the position taken by the mobile defense advocates. Edward N. Luttwak, "The American Style of Warfare and the Military Balance," Survival (March/April 79) pp. 57-60. Steven L. Canby, "NATO: Reassessing the Conventional Wisdoms," Survival (Jul/Aug 77) pp. 164-168. John H. Maurer and Gordon H. McCormick, "Surprise Attack and Conventional Defense in Europe," ORBIS (Spring 83) pp. 107-126. F. W. Von Mellenthin, et al. NATO Under Attack (Durham, Duke University Press, 1984).

The reader is also referred to the following articles to get a representative view from those who are more in favor of a forward defense. John J. Mearsheimer, "Manuever, Mobile Defense, and the NATO Central Front," International Security (Winter 81/82) pp. 104-122. Phillip A. Karber, "In Defense of Forward Defense," Armed Forces Journal International (May 84) pp. 27-50.

5. FM 100-5 (Final Draft), p. 3-13.

6. General Leopold Chalupa, "The Defense of Central Europe: Implications of Change," RUSI Journal for Defense Studies (Mar 85) pp. 13-17. Note to the reader, while the French are NATO members, they are not a formal member of the military portion of NATO.

7. General Chalupa, pp. 13-14. Note that AFCENT is charged with restoring NATO's territorial integrity and not winning the war.

8. Flexible response, in brief is a NATO strategy of deterrence which links conventional, non strategic, and strategic nuclear weapons in a continuum of escalatory response. For a good summary, the reader is referred to an article by Wifred Hofmann, "Is NATO's Defence Policy Facing a Crisis," NATO Review (Aug 84) pp. 1-7.

9. While this is true in general, factors such as terrain and peacetime positioning preclude the establishment of a strong covering force in certain sectors such as the V(US) Corps.

10. General Chalupa, p. 15. Follow on Forces Attack (FOFA) is a NATO concept which is designed to defeat and/or delay follow on Warsaw Pact forces from closing on the main battle area. For a general discussion of this concept, the reader is referred to an article by General Bernard W. Rogers, "Follow on Forces Attack (FOFA): Myths and Realities," NATO Review (Dec 84), pp. 1-9.

11. P.H. Vigor, Soviet Blitzkrieg Theory (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1983) Chapters 1, 12-14. In this book, Vigor presents an excellent overview of the emphasis the Soviets place on achieving surprise at the operational and strategic level. Consistent with this, he makes a good case for the no notice or so called "standing start" Warsaw Pact scenario.

12. General Chalupa, p. 14.

13. LTC Michael J. Morin, Does NATO Need a Conventional Operational Strategy (U.S. Army War College Individual Study Project: Carlisle Barracks, Pa., 1980) p. 12.

14. FM 100-5 (Final Draft) p. 8-13. For a superb historical analysis of the concept of mobile defense, the reader is referred to an unpublished work by Col J.R. Alford Mobile Defense: The Pervasive Myth (London: Dept of War Studies, Kings College, 1977).

15. FM 100-5 (Final Draft) p. 8-13.

16. FM 100-5 (Final Draft) p. 8-13.

17. Maj James M. Dubik, "A Critique of "In Defense of Forward Defense"" Armed Forces Journal International (Aug 84) pp. 46-47.

18. Maurer and McCormick, p. 259.

19. Von Mellenthin et al., pp. 126-127.

20. Phillip A. Karber, "Symposium," Armed Forces and Society (Fall 80) pp. 70-75.

21. General Chalupa, p. 17.

22. Carl Von Clausewitz, On War (Edited and translated by Michael Howard and Peter Paret; Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1984) While Clausewitz does not specifically address operational reserves, it is clear that his notion of the strategic level of war closely conforms to what is now regarded in our army as the operational level. For example on page 177, Clausewitz defines strategy as "... the use of the engagement for the purpose of war." This is very similar to the idea that the operational art uses campaigns as a means of linking tactical actions to achieve strategic ends.

23. Clausewitz, p. 211.
24. Clausewitz, p. 213.
25. Clausewitz, p. 211.
26. FM 100-5 (Final Draft), p.3-13.
27. FM 100-5 (Final Draft), p. 9-21.
28. FM 100-5 (Final Draft), p. 9-4.
29. LTC David M. Glantz, From the Don to the Dnieper: A Study of Soviet Operations, Dec 1942-Aug 1943 (U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, Ks., 1985), pp. 100-104.
30. Field Marshall Erich Von Manstein, Lost Victories (Edited and translated by Anthony G. Powell, Novato, Ca.: Presidio Press, 1982), pp. 368-370. As will be illustrated later, while they did not have a technical mobility advantage here, in a much more significant way, the Germans enjoyed a decided mobility advantage over the Soviets mentally and doctrinally.
31. Maj Timothy A. Wray, Standing East: German Defense Doctrine on the Russian Front During the Second World War (Masters Thesis, Command and General Staff College: Fort Leavenworth, Ks., 1983), pp. 187-188.
32. Glantz, p.109.
33. Von Manstein, p.409.
34. Wray, pp. 140 and 195-197. In brief, there was also disagreement between the panzer officers and the infantry officers concerning the proper manner to deal with Soviet breakthroughs. The infantry officers favored quick local counterattacks emphasizing speed and thus favored pushing the panzer units down to corps and divisions. The panzer leaders, needless to say, preferred to employ their panzer forces in mass in a more deliberately organized counterattack after the penetration had had a chance to develop. This debate would continue throughout the war.
35. Wray, p. 212.
36. Russell F. Weigley, Eisenhower's Lieutenants (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1981), pp. 443-444.
37. Hugh M. Cole, The Ardennes: Battle of the Bulge (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1983), p. 53.
38. Cole, p.56.

39. Cole, pp. 310 and 332-333.
40. Cole, pp. 333-334.
41. Weigley, p. 463.
42. Cole, p. 650.
43. Cole, pp. 333-334.
44. Weigley, pp. 496-500.
45. Cole, p. 651.
46. This is the primary claim made by Weigley in his book. As an exception to the rule he cites Patton's actions in general and specific actions in particular such as his ninety degree turn with the Third Army in December 1944. However, it was Patton who several days later conducted a broad front attack with the Third Army rather than a rapid and violent counterattack of annihilation.
47. Guenther Blumentritt, Von Rundstedt, The Soldier and the Man (Odhams: London, 1952), p. 170.
48. Walter Warlimont, Inside Hitler's Headquarters 1939-45 (Weidenfeld and Nicholson: London, 1964), pp. 410-411.
49. Sir Basil Henry Liddell Hart, The Rommel Papers (Translated by Paul Findlay, London: Collins, 1953), p. 466.
50. Heinz Guderian, Panzer Leader (Michael Joseph Ltd.: London, 1952), p. 328.
51. The Rommel Papers, pp. 454-455.
52. Major L.F. Ellis, Victory in the West, Vol I, The Battle of Normandy (London, 1962), p. 120.
53. Warlimont, pp. 425-426.
54. Blumentritt, p. 229 and LTG Hans Speidel, We Defended Normandy (Translated by Ian Colvin, Herbert Jenkins: London, 1951), pp. 97 and 109.
55. Col Creighton W. Abrams, "Mobility vs. Firepower" Published in The Art of War Quarterly, Vol III (U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, Pa., 1984), p. 113.
56. FM 100-5 (Final Draft), p. 2-14.
57. Maj George S. Webb, The Flashing Sword of Vengeance: The Force-Oriented Counterattack from a Historical Perspective with Implications for the AirLand Battle and Combat Aviation (Unpublished Document, U. S. Command and General Staff

College: Fort Leavenworth, Ks., 1985), p. 3.

58. Clausewitz, Book One, Chapter three, pp. 100-112. Briefly, Clausewitz views genius as consisting of two parts. The first is coup d'oeil- the ability to accurately sense the enemy's intentions through the haze of conflicting information. The second is courage- the willingness to follow through with a course of action and not take council of your fears.

59. See an article by General Ferdinand M. Von Senger und Etterlin, "New Operational Concepts," RUSI Journal for Defense Studies (Jun 83) pp. 11-15. This article contains an interesting discussion of the concept of air mechanization as a means of improving tactical and operational mobility on the European battlefield. It should be stressed here that while this may overcome some of the technological limitations to mobility, it still does not address differences in doctrine and command and control across multi-national boundaries.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books, Theses, and Monographs

- Alford, Col J.R. Mobile Defense: The Pervasive Myth. London: Dept of War Studies, King's College, 1977. (copy available in CARL; Fort Leavenworth, Ks.)
- Blumenson, Martin. Breakout and Pursuit. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1984.
- Blumentritt, Guenther. Von Rundstedt. Odhams: London, 1952.
- Campbell, MAJ Charles C. Surprise: The Precursor to Soviet Operational Success. School of Advanced Military Studies: Fort Leavenworth, Ks., 1986 (unpublished monograph).
- Close, General Robert. Europe Without Defense. New York: Pergamon, 1979.
- Cole, Hugh M. The Ardennes: Battle of the Bulge. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1983.
- Ellis, Major L.F., et al. Victory in the West, Vol I, The Battle of Normandy. London, 1962.
- Guderian, Heinz. Panzer Leader. London: Michael Joseph Ltd., 1952.
- Levine, R., et al. A Survey of NATO Defense Concepts. Santa Monica, Ca.: Rand Corp., 1982.
- Liddel Hart, Sir Basil Henry. The Rommel Papers. Translated by Paul Findlay. London: Collins, 1953.
- Morin, LTC Michael J. Does NATO Need a New Conventional Operational Strategy. U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, Pa., 1980.
- Natkiel, Richard and Robin L. Sommer. Atlas of WWII. The Military Press, New York: Bison Books Corp., 1985.
- Novikov, V. and F. Sverdlov. Manoeuvre in Modern Land Warfare. Translated by Gennady Khmelev. Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1972.
- Reznichenko, V.G. Tactica. Edited machine translation. Foreign Technology Division, Air Force Systems Command, 1967.
- Speidel, LTG Hans. We Defended Normandy. Translated by Ian Collins. London: Herbert Jenkins, 1951.

- Vigor, P.H. Soviet Blitzkrieg Theory. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1983.
- Von Clausewitz, Carl. On War. Edited and translated by Michael Howard and Peter Paret. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1984.
- Von Leeb, Field Marshall Ritter. Defense. Translated by Dr. Stefan T. Possony and Daniel Vifnroy. Harrisburg: The Military Service Publishing Company, 1943.
- Von Manstein, Field Marshall Erich. Lost Victories. Edited and translated by Anthony G. Powell. Novato, Ca.: Presidio Press, 1982.
- Von Mellenthin, F.W., et al. NATO Under Attack. Durham: Duke University Press, 1984.
- Warlimont, Walter. Inside Hitler's Headquarters 1939-45. London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1964.
- Webb, MAJ George S. The Flashing Sword of Vengeance: The Force-Oriented Counterattack from a Historical Perspective with Implications for the AirLand Battle and Combat Aviation. School of Advanced Military Studies: Fort Leavenworth, Ks., 1985. (unpublished monograph)
- Weigley, Russell F. Eisenhower's Lieutenants. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1981.
- Wray, MAJ Timothy A. Standing Fast: German Defensive Doctrine on the Russian Front During the Second World War. MMAS Thesis. Command and General Staff College: Fort Leavenworth, Ks., 1983.

Government Documents

- U.S. Department of the Army. Operations, FM 100-5 (Final Draft). Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1985.

Articles and Periodicals

- Bagnall, General Sir Nigel. "Concepts of Land/Air Operations in the Central Region." RUSI Journal for Defense Studies. Sep 84, pp. 59-62.
- Canby, Steven. "Territorial Defense in Central Europe." Armed Forces and Society. Fall 80, pp. 51-67.
- Canby, Steven. "NATO: Reassessing the Conventional Wisdoms".

Survival. July/Aug 77, pp. 164-168.

Chalupa, General Leopold. "The Defense of Central Europe: Implications of Change." RUSI Journal for Defense Studies. Mar 85, pp. 13-17.

Cordesman, Anthony H. "The NATO Central Region and the Balance of Uncertainty." Current News. Aug 83, pp. 18-58.

Dick, C.J. "Catching NATO Unawares: Soviet Army Surprise and Deception Techniques." International Defense Review. Jan 86, p. 26.

Dubik, MAJ James M. "A Critique of 'In Defense of Forward Defense'." Armed Forces Journal International. Aug 84, pp. 46-47.

Karber, Phillip A. "In Defense of Forward Defense." Armed Forces Journal International. May 84, pp. 27-50.

Karber, Phillip A. "Symposium." Armed Forces and Society. Fall 80, pp. 70-75.

Luttwak, Edward N. "The American Style of Warfare and the Military Balance." Survival. Mar/Apr 79, pp. 57-60.

Luttwak, Edward N. "The Operational Level of War." International Society. Winter 80/81, pp. 61-79.

Maurer, John H. and Gordon H. McCormick. "Surprise Attack and Conventional Defense in Europe." ORBIS. Spring 83, pp. 107-126.

Mearsheimer, John J. "Manuever, Mobile Defense, and the NATO Central Front." International Security. Winter 81/82, pp. 104-122.

Rogers, General Bernard W. "Follow-on Forces Attack (FOFA): Myths and Realities." NATO Review. Dec 84, pp. 1-9.

Tillison, John C.V. "The Forward Defense of Europe." Military Review. May 81, pp. 66-76.

Von Senger und Etterlin, Ferdinand M. "New Operational Concepts." International Defense Review. Jun 83. pp. 11-15.

Unpublished Documents

Glantz, LTC David M. From the Don to the Dnieper: A Study of Soviet Operations. Dec 1942-Aug 1943. U.S. Army Command

and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, Ks., 1985.

Historical Division, Office of the Chief of Military History.
Rommel and the Atlantic Wall. Washington: U.S.
Government Printing Office, 1954. (copy available in
CARL; Fort Leavenworth, Ks.)

END

1-87

DTIC